Twin Peaks: The Return Recap Part 4

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by Budd Wilkins on May 28, 2017 in TV



Showtime

Watching the first four episodes of *Twin Peaks: The Return* has been tantamount to participating in an exceptionally gnomic guessing game. Most of the lingering questions that have been raised thus far center on matters of significance—and in both senses of the word. What does *this* mean? But also, how important is *this* particular thread to the overall warp and woof of the tapestry that David Lynch and Mark Frost are weaving? "Part 3" offered a seemingly out-of-leftfield scene that lingered over Dr. Jacoby spraying shovels with gold paint, and after "Part 4," we're no closer to finding out why.

The episode opens with Cooper (Kyle MacLachlan) in the midst of his winning spree, greeting every jackpot with a booming "Hello-o-o!" Even the shock-haired slot addict (Linda Porter) who was so angrily proprietorial over the machines last time now begs advice from the man she dubs Mr. Jackpots. Cooper's encounter with a couple (Ethan Suplee and Sara Paxton) who are Dougie Jones's friends might be written off as mere plot contrivance—there to clue Cooper in on where Jones lives so he can make his way there later. But their conversation about whether or not Dougie seems okay plays into one of the show's ongoing themes, an oblique invocation of Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle: In Lynch land, it's awfully difficult to pin down any single particle of knowledge. It just might be about the bunny, after all.

When Cooper, along with his sack full of winnings, is hustled into the casino supervisor's office, the man (Brett Gelman) extends an overtly solicitous yet vaguely threatening invitation to patronize the Silver Mustang anytime, day or night. But Cooper is more interested in the domed surveillance camera on the ceiling. The scene slyly suggests the

surveillance on the glass box back in New York, which we know to have been funded by an anonymous billionaire. Likely he's the same man being discussed in hushed tones by Duncan Todd (Patrick Fischler) in "Part 2"—a standalone scene that was also set in Las Vegas.

Standing on the curb in front of the Jones house, Cooper watches an owl swoop overhead. Owls were a frequent motif in the original series, signifying things "are not what they seem." And that's certainly the case chez Jones: Initially angry at Dougie's protracted absence, his wife, Janey-E (Naomi Watts), changes her tune when she sees what's in the sack. Her claim that the money will pay off some unspecified debt probably has something to do with the hit men who were lying in wait for Dougie outside Rancho Rosa in "Part 3."

Back in Philadelphia, Gordon Cole (Lynch) is ushered into the office of the F.B.I. chief of staff by Bill Kennedy (Richard Chamberlain). True to form, Lynch uses a bit of stray dialogue to suggest the long history between these two men, even though its significance is entirely lost on viewers. Past events prove to be the topic du jour when the door opens to reveal that the bureau chief is none other than Denise Bryson (David Duchovny). Duchovny's performance may border on camp, but the scene suddenly summons a touching sense of inclusiveness when Cole reminds Denise what he said to some harassing fellow agents: "I told those clown comics, fix their hearts or die."

The episode's emotional epicenter is Bobby Briggs, now white-haired and working as a deputy for the department.

Prior to the debut of *Twin Peaks: The Return*, there was a lot of scuttlebutt about why original series regular Michael Ontkean wouldn't be returning as Sheriff Harry S. Truman, and how the new series would handle his absence. We got an inkling of that in a throwaway scene back in "Part 1," when Lucy (Kimmy Robertson) asks an insurance salesman looking for Sheriff Truman which one he wants, seeing as how one's sick and the other's fishing. "Part 4" introduces us to the current Sheriff Truman—Harry's brother, Frank (Robert Forster)—with an ostensibly silly gag involving a mobile phone that terrorizes poor Lucy, a staunch advocate of the cord-based landline.

Things, though, are never what they seem. Lucy has been kept on at the sheriff's station as a sort of totemic figurehead, since the real nuts and bolts of dispatch and police work are being handled elsewhere in a second, far more high-tech area of the station. It's a bizarre and borderline brilliant notion that's deployed very matter-of-factly, further playing up the idea of Lucy and Andy's anachronistic golly-gee-whiz innocuousness. Things get even weirder when the couple's son, Wally Brando Brennan (Michael Cera), turns up. Capped and leather-clad like Johnny Strabler in *The Wild One*, Cera lays down a lisping riff that parodies a handful of Marlon Brando's films, as well as the peripatetic

philosophizing of your average Kerouac-era beatnik in general.

The emotional epicenter of the episode is Bobby Briggs (Dana Ashbrook), now white-haired and working as a deputy for the department. When he sees that iconic yearbook photo of Laura Palmer among the evidence spread out on the conference room table, he immediately breaks down in tears, while Angelo Badalamenti's hauntingly elegiac "Laura's Theme" plays. It's a truly affecting moment that Lynch allows to play out at length. Then, shifting tonal gears, as he so expertly does, Lynch shatters the pathos by having Bobby deprecatingly sum things up: "Man, that brings back memories."

Still bewildered by the mere task of donning Dougie's oversized, garishly hued clothes, Cooper has a vision of the one-armed man (Al Strobel), who tells him he's been tricked, presumably by his doppelganger, into swapping places with Dougie. The Joneses' morning routine plays like a sun-dappled parody of domesticity, from Cooper clowning around for Sonny Jim (Pierce Gagnon) with his tie draped over his head, to the mug stenciled "I Am Dougie's Coffee," complete with a jaunty Dave Brubeck needle drop. What's more, Cooper's spit-take response to Janey-E's subpar coffee-brewing skills is damn fine.

"Part 4" ends with Cole, Albert (Miguel Ferrer), and Tamara (Chrysta Bell) traveling to the South Dakota federal prison where Bad Dale is being held for "numerous crimes." The doppelganger acts bizarrely, presumably because it was purged of its garmonbozia in the car crash, and so can no longer keep up its pretense of humanity. He explains his decades-long absence by saying he's been working undercover for Phillip Jeffries, the character played memorably by David Bowie in *Fire Walk with Me*. Bowie was to have reprised his role here, but he passed away before his scenes could be filmed. Given the show's *in absentia* workaround, we'll probably never get to talk about Judy now.

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Twin Peaks: The Return Recap Part 5



by Budd Wilkins

Only time will tell how the latest episode of *Twin Peaks* figures into the show's ongoing mythology.

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Twin Peaks: The Return Recap Part 3



by Budd Wilkins

Part three of *Twin Peaks: The Return* plays like one of David Lynch's hermetically sealed surrealist short films.

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Twin Peaks: The Return Recap Parts 1 & 2



by Budd Wilkins

The first two episodes of *Twin Peaks: The Return* are largely preoccupied with sowing the seeds for later developments.

